



Pesticide and Noxious Weed Newsletter

Summer 2004

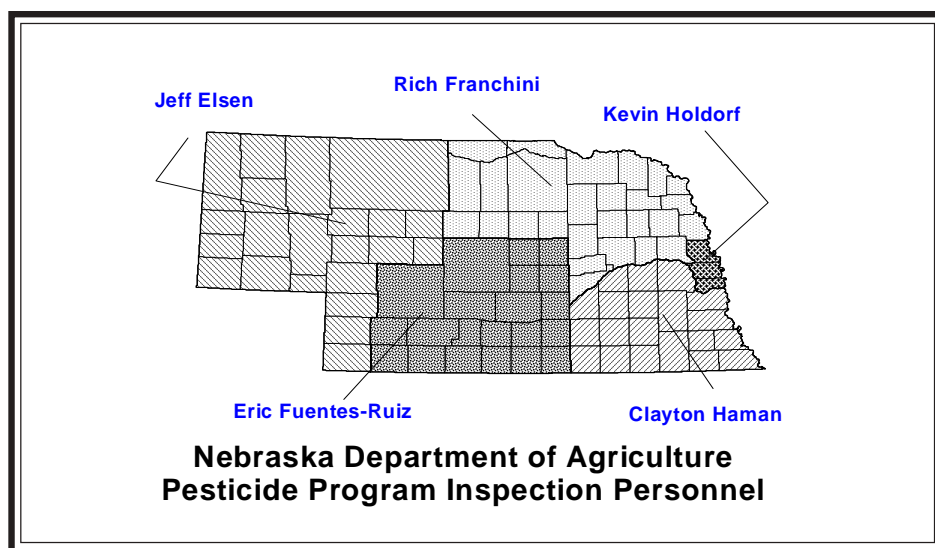
Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Vol. 15

Changes Happening with Pesticide Program

The Pesticide Program recently lost inspector Don Kemper, who passed away on May 29. Don was an employee of the NDA for 32 years, and spent many of those years working in the Pesticide Program and its predecessor, the old Economic Poisons Program. Don's territory was the Omaha metro area and the lower Platte River Valley. Don was well liked by nearly all who knew him. He was a native Nebraskan, who grew up just east of Lincoln, and attended the University of Nebraska in the early 60's on a football scholarship. Don earned a PhD in agronomy while at UNL, and hired on with the NDA shortly after graduation. He was married and had four grown children. We will miss him greatly.

While it is difficult to lose a valued employee in this way, it also presents an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the overall program, and change things where needed. In looking at the compliance and enforcement data of the Omaha metro area, it was obvious to us that there was more than enough work for one inspector in that area alone.



While the Pesticide Program is not currently able to increase in the number of field inspectors, we are able to shift territories in a manner that will better utilize the resources available. To this end, a shift in all inspector territories will be made this summer. A map of the new territories is above, with a list of inspectors and assigned counties. Please welcome Kevin Holdorf as the inspector who will cover the Omaha metro area. More information about Kevin will appear in our next newsletter.

Counties assigned to Inspectors:

Clayton Haman

Butler, Cass, Clay, Fillmore, Gage, Hamilton, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Nuckolls, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, and York

Eric Fuentes-Ruiz

Adams, Buffalo, Custer, Dawson,

Franklin, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Greeley, Hall, Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock, Howard, Kearney, Lincoln, Phelps, Red Willow, Sherman, Valley, and Webster

Jeff Elsen

Arthur, Banner, Box Butte, Chase, Cherry, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Dundy, Garden, Grant, Hooker, Keith, Kimball, Logan, McPherson, Morrill, Perkins, Scotts Bluff, Sheridan, Sioux, and Thomas

Rich Franchini

Antelope, Blaine, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Burt, Cedar, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Dodge, Garfield, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Loup, Madison, Merrick, Nance, Pierce, Platte, Rock, Stanton, Thurston, Wayne, and Wheeler

Kevin Holdorf

Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington

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Saltcedar: Nebraska's Next Noxious Weed

Saltcedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*), also known as Tamarisk, is an invasive weed introduced from Eurasia and found in Nebraska along rivers, streams, and lakes. It is a perennial deciduous shrub or small tree, reproducing by seeds, and perennial structures such as tap root and stem. In search for moisture, the tap root can grow downwards as deep as 50 feet.



Steve Dewey, Utah State University

The plants can grow as individual trees or shrubs. The woody stem is erect up to 20 feet tall, and the bark is brown or reddish-brown. The leaves are small and scale like (as in cedar trees) with many divisions on slender, highly-branched green stems.

In Nebraska, saltcedar can flower from June to August with small white to deep pink flowers. Flowers produce numerous small tuft seeds that can be carried by wind and water. However, the seeds have a short period of viability and must contact suitable soil moisture within a few weeks of dispersal to grow.

In the early 1900s, saltcedar was planted along stream banks for soil erosion control. However, saltcedar is actually detrimental to the natural habitat. The high-absorption rate of saltcedar can equal 200 gallons of water per day. The salt excreted from the leaves to the soil surface under the plant inhibits germination and growth of competing species. As a result, many wildlife species are negatively affected by habitat changes and native plant species are displaced.

Saltcedar infestations have been documented throughout Nebraska. Infestations have been found along the Platte River from Wyoming to the Missouri River. Also, saltcedar is found along many of Nebraska's southwest reservoirs as well as Lake McConaughy. Smaller infestations have been reported on the Republican and Missouri rivers. Nebraska counties report approximately 5,000 acres of saltcedar. Several counties and weed management areas have started efforts to control this invasive plant species.

For more information regarding saltcedar, contact your local county weed control authority or the Nebraska Department of Agriculture.

Federal Pesticide Decisions

The following information is an example of the kind of material available to the public from EPA. The comment period for some of these will have passed by the time this is published, but those interested can stay informed of potential actions by subscribing to electronic notifications from EPA by visiting <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/listserv.htm>. You can view the background material and see the comments received by searching for a specific active ingredient at <http://www.epa.gov/edocket/>. Much of the information presented in these risk assessments is highly technical and discusses how EPA determines acceptable risks through exposure studies and models. However, because future decisions based on these studies may affect you and your industry, it may be beneficial to understand how these decisions are made.

- Metam Sodium (OPP-2004-0159)
- Methyl Parathion (OPP-2003-0237)
- 2,4-D (OPP-2004-0167)
- MCPA (OPP-2004-0156)

Electronic Pesticide and Noxious Weed Newsletter

Many of you have received this issue of the newsletter for the first time as an e-mail notification. The NDA is attempting to reduce mailing costs associated with the newsletter, and will be utilizing e-mail attachments and/or web-posting notifications more and more. For those who are still receiving hard copies, please notify us if you would rather view our newsletter electronically. Simply send an e-mail to craiglr@agr.state.ne.us with the subject "add to newsletter e-mail list." Please also indicate in the message what, if any, license you hold. This will aid in finding you on our mailing lists. On the other hand, if you were added to our e-mail list in error or would rather receive a hard copy, please follow the directions that came with your e-mail notification.

To see our past newsletters, visit <http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pstnx/news.htm>.

Conservation Buffers Still Work... Economically and Environmentally

Included in this issue is a fact sheet describing the benefits of conservation buffers—best management practices offered through several USDA programs. If you are a crop consultant, dealer, or a pesticide applicator with a commercial Ag Plant license, your advice is respected by the landowners and operators who hire you. Please take the time to mention these and other conservation practices that will reduce the impact of pesticides beyond the application site. In addition, you could make copies of this fact sheet available to your customers. It can be found on the world wide web at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/buffers/notetoproducers.html>.

First Pesticide Technical Interpretation - Intermittent Streams

Changes to the Nebraska Pesticide Act in 2002 allowed the Pesticide Program to create documents that will offer formal interpretations of pesticide label terms. These documents will be called Pesticide Technical Interpretations, which will be abbreviated PTI for short. The first PTI has been created, reviewed, and will be published and distributed to the public this summer. It covers definitions relative to intermittent streams. The second PTI, which is nearing completion, will address termiticide labeling. Once published and distributed, a PTI will serve as official Department policy for regulatory purposes.

Historically, pesticides that have a high leaching or runoff potential have had a number of restrictions for use on the label. Quite often these restrictions require the applicator to set back from anything associated with open water, such as rivers, lakes, and farm ponds. This label language also often included the term "intermittent stream" as something that was to be protected from pesticide contamination through runoff or leaching, however, the labels

did not further identify exactly what an intermittent stream was. Due to the ongoing drought in our area, the question has been asked if traditionally intermittent streams no longer meet the requirement for stream setbacks. Without a formal definition, the Pesticide Program was hard pressed to provide a reasonable answer to this question.

This question was underscored by a situation in which the Pesticide Program was considering enforcement action for application of atrazine and isoxaflutole near an area which was classified as an intermittent stream by 30-year old maps, but hadn't carried water for over 10 years due to changes in local farming practices. The need for a clear interpretation was obvious, so over the following winter and spring months, the Pesticide Program developed its first PTI (hence the title: PTI - 1.0: Intermittent Streams). The challenge of this PTI has been settling on an easy way to make a call in the field without referring to numerous sources of old information. The PTI is too long to publish in this newsletter, but it will soon be mailed out to every person holding a private applicator license or a Category 01 (Ag Plant) commercial/non-commercial license. All PTIs will be posted to our web site at: www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pes/technical/htm.

Nebraska's e-Government Web Portal

The State of Nebraska has implemented a web page where the public has access to most of the business forms agencies use. Called Nebraska@ Online for Business (<http://www.nebraska.gov/business/>), this site offers a search function where you can search by the title, a key word, a specific department or agency, or by an industry group. Most of the forms available are "browser editable" Adobe Acrobat files, meaning you can fill them out right from your Internet browser. Then all you need is a print out, and you can snail-mail it to the appropriate office.

USGS Releases 2004 Report

A report, Water Quality in the Nation's Streams and Aquifers: Overview of Selected Findings, 1991–2001, was recently published by the U.S. Geological Survey. This report accompanies the publication of the last 15 of 51 river basin and aquifer assessments by the USGS National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) Program during 1991–2001. It highlights selected water-quality findings of regional and national interest through examples from river basins and aquifer systems across the Nation. The report and the 51 regional reports can be found at <http://water.usgs.gov/nawqa/>.

Check it Out!

Information that has been added recently to NDA's web pages:

- Mixer/Loader Training Verification Form (<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pes/mixload.pdf>)
- Which Pesticide Applicator License Do I Need? brochure (<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pes/wpai.htm>)
- Guidance for Developing A Fumigation Management Plan (FMP) (<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pes/fmp.htm>)
- Weeds of the Great Plains book order form (<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/forms/nw11.pdf>)
- The Pesticide Enforcement Process brochure (<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pes/enfbroc.htm>)
- Results of the 2003 Waste Pesticide Collection Program (<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pes/waste.htm>)
- Summaries of Water Quality Monitoring for Isoxaflutole (and other reports) (<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pes/gwater4.htm>)

Thriving Container Recycling Program Continues

Visit <http://pested.unl.edu/recycle.htm> to find a collection site near you. Or call your local County Extension office for locations and instructions.



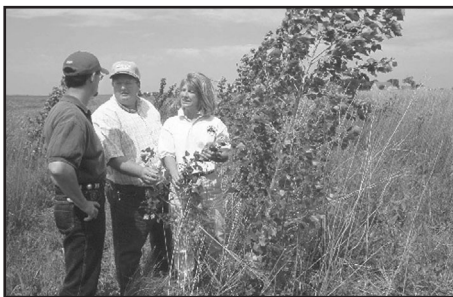
Note to producers: **Conservation buffers**

still work . . .

economically & environmentally

More opportunities than ever

Ask your neighbor about the advantages



Are conservation buffers a good economic choice for your operation? Your neighbor may be the best person to ask. Farmers and ranchers are among the strongest and most credible advocates for use of buffers and supporting practices.

- More than 250,000 buffer contracts with USDA have been signed.
- Nearly 160,000 farms and ranches have buffers, installed under voluntary programs that provide annual rental payments and other financial incentives.
- There is no bidding, no waiting. Offers are automatically accepted if eligibility and other requirements are met.
- Payments vary across the country, with an average of about \$97 an acre per year.

Many farmers and ranchers find that setting aside environmentally sensitive land makes a lot of economic sense. Employees at your local USDA service center or conservation district office can tell you more. Or you can ask a neighbor!

Good for you and the environment



In addition to providing economic benefits, buffers can help you achieve a number of important conservation objectives. When used with supporting practices, buffers can help you:

- Prevent soil erosion.
- Improve water quality by removing sediment, fertilizers, pesticides and other pollutants from runoff.
- Improve air quality.
- Enhance fish and wildlife habitat.
- Control flooding.
- Improve farm safety.
- Protect buildings, roads and livestock.
- Conserve energy.
- Beautify the landscape.

USDA's voluntary incentive programs, including the continuous Conservation Reserve Program — CCRP — are stronger than ever. They are valuable tools that can help you sustain your operation and protect the environment. That's good news for today and tomorrow!

Partners say: 'We're with you'



America's farmers and ranchers often must "go it alone," but when it comes to buffers, other partners have jumped in to help. Their message is, "We're in this together!"

- Groups like Pheasants Forever, Trout Unlimited and Quail Unlimited believe so strongly in buffers that they are committing thousands of dollars and volunteer assistance to increase buffer establishment.
- Citizen groups are providing funding and volunteer support for buffer programs.
- States and cities are supporting buffer programs on rural land, in recognition of the positive impacts buffers have on drinking water supplies.
- Rural lenders often promote buffers as a wise economic choice.
- Many farm-related groups and businesses, including cooperatives, also support buffer use.

Talk to USDA service center or conservation district personnel about partners in your area.

Now, more than ever, buffers are the right choice

Conservation buffers are a simple way for you and many other farmers and ranchers to stay profitable while protecting your land. USDA supports the use of buffers on cropland, pasture and rangeland through several conservation programs, including the continuous Conservation Reserve Program, or CCRP. Unlike the regular CRP, sign-up for the CCRP is available year-round.

Financial incentives available through CCRP are especially attractive. They include:

- A signing incentive payment of \$100 to \$150 per acre for riparian buffers, filter strips, grassed waterways, shelterbelts, field windbreaks, living snow fences, farmable wetlands and wetland buffers, and marginable pastureland wildlife habitat and wetland buffers.
- Up to 50 percent cost sharing for practice installation.

- A practice incentive payment of up to 40 percent of eligible practice installation costs.
- A 20 percent rental rate incentive for riparian buffers, filter strips, grassed waterways and field windbreaks.
- A 10 percent rental rate incentive for wellhead protection areas.
- Higher annual maintenance payments per acre for certain activities.
- Competitive rental rates nationwide for installing riparian buffers on marginal grazing land.



More options for producers

Today, more than ever, USDA's conservation programs are complementary, so that farmers and ranchers can combine conservation practices to do what's best for their working land. The programs are also voluntary, and most provide incentives and cost sharing.

One of America's largest private land conservation programs is the CCRP. Incentives and cost sharing make it a wise economic choice, and it's recognized by farmers and ranchers across the country as common-sense conservation at its best.

A related program available in about half the states is the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. CREP is a federal-state-local program that addresses specific conservation needs, primarily water quality, in the states where it operates.

You'll find that, in addition to CCRP and CREP, several other programs can help you install conservation buffers. Here are

just a few examples:

Environmental Quality Incentives

Program — Significant increases in funding for EQIP in the 2002 farm bill make it an attractive program. Livestock-related natural resource concerns and other conservation priorities, including buffers, are among the practices EQIP funds. Local input helps establish local conservation priorities under EQIP.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

— WHIP is a voluntary program for landowners who want to develop and improve fish and wildlife habitat on private land.

Wetlands Reserve Program

Landowners can protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their property with this voluntary program.

Forest Land Enhancement Program

— A new program in the 2002 farm bill, FLEP provides cost sharing, technical assistance and education to owners of

private forest land. Planning, tree planting, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian restoration and forest improvement are among the practices that states and private landowners may focus on with FLEP.

Eligible practices

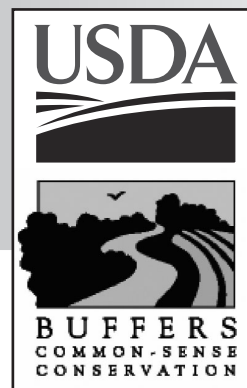
One or more of these buffers may be right for your farm or ranch

- Grassed waterways
- Contour grass strips
- Shelterbelts/field windbreaks
- Living snow fences
- Vegetation to reduce salinity
- Filter strips
- Riparian buffers
- Wetland restorations
- Cross-wind trap strips
- Farmable wetlands
- Farmable wetland buffers
- Marginal pastureland wildlife habitat buffers
- Marginal pastureland wetland buffers
- Shallow water areas for wildlife
- Public wellhead protection buffers

'OK, where can I learn more?'

- Ask a neighbor who has installed conservation buffers about the economic and environmental benefits.
- Your local USDA service center or conservation district office can provide details about rental payments, cost-share options and other buffer assistance programs available in your area.
- Your state forester's office or consulting foresters can offer advice about what tree and shrub species are appropriate for use in buffers in your area.
- You can also talk to agricultural consultants and representatives of agribusiness firms to find out more about conservation buffers and their use on your farm or ranch.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



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